

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON BILL NO. **S.297, as Amended**

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TO:	The Honorable Leon Howard, Chairman, House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee		
FROM:	Office of State Budget, Budget and Control Board		
ANALYSTS:	R.J. Stein, Earle Powell, Allan Kincaid		
DATE:	February 1, 2008	SBD:	2008067

AUTHOR:	Senator Peeler	PRIMARY CODE CITE:	44-61-80
SUBJECT:	Criminal Records Check for EMT's		

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES:

A Cost to the General Fund (See Below)

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT ON FEDERAL & OTHER FUND EXPENDITURES:

\$0 (No additional expenditures or savings are expected)

BILL SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 297, as amended, amends Section 44-61-80(d) and (e) of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, relating to the requirements for certification (and recertification) as an Emergency Medical Technician so as to also require the applicant to undergo both State and National criminal records checks. The Bill requires each applicant to pay the criminal records check fees to the Department of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC). The fee the applicant pays for the State records check is limited to \$8.00. (The usual charge is \$25.00).

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT:

Department of Health & Environmental Control (DHEC)

The Department indicates that an Administrative Assistant (0.50 FTE) would be needed to process fingerprint cards and money orders, answer telephone inquiries, respond to written requests and perform other related duties. The annual cost is estimated at \$21,000 (\$18,000 for salary and fringe benefits and \$3,000 for operating expenses). Assuming the State Law Enforcement Division accepts \$8.00 for the criminal records check, there would not be any additional cost to DHEC for the record check.

State Law Enforcement Division (SLED)

Section 44-61-80 indicates the cost of the background check may be paid by the EMT or the EMT agency and that the cost of the state criminal records check must not exceed eight dollars. Assuming other funds revenue will cover the operating cost of conducting the state background check there should be no additional cost to the State General Fund upon enactment. However, because the Bill requires that the results of these criminal records checks must be reported to DHEC, there will be a one-time cost of \$159,200 to the General Fund of the State to modify the current system for transmitting this information to DHEC. SLED indicates the cost for the federal criminal record check is \$13.25 if submitted electronically and \$30.25 if mailed.

It should be noted that Proviso 56DD.7 of the FY 2007-08 Appropriation Act allows the agency to collect and retain criminal record search fees in excess of \$4,461,000 to be expended for agency operations.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IMPACT:

The eight local governments that responded to our survey indicated minimal or no impact with the adoption of this bill. Most indicated they have this requirement already in force.

SPECIAL NOTES:

None.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry Bell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "H" and a distinct "Bell" at the end.

Harry Bell
Assistant Director, Office of State Budget